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# ENG 3401G-001: Methods of Teaching Composition in Secondary Schools

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**ENG3401: Methods of Teaching Composition in Secondary Schools**  
**Fall 2004**

Instructor: Donna Binns

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Hours: MWF 9:00 a.m.—9:50 a.m.

Phone: 581-6299

MW 1:00 p.m.—1:50 p.m.

**Course Description:** This course explores approaches to the teaching and evaluating of written composition in secondary schools.

**Course Objectives: Following NCTE Guidelines and Illinois Content Area Standards this course will:**

1. demonstrate how reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, and thinking are interrelated;
2. recognize the impact of cultural, economic, and social environments upon language;
3. show a respect for and an understanding of diversity in language use, patterns, dialects, across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and social roles;
4. demonstrate the influence of language and visual images on thinking and composition;
5. demonstrate how written discourse can influence thought and action;
6. display an understanding of the role of technology in communication;
7. use major sources of research and theory and understand the relationship between research and practice;
8. examine, evaluate, and select resources;
9. design instruction to meet the needs of all students and provide for students' continuous progress and success;
10. organize classroom environments and learning experiences that promote effective whole class, small group, and individual work;
11. create learning environments that promote respect for and support of individual differences of ethnicity, race, language, culture, gender, and ability;
12. use assessment as an integral part of instruction and learning.

**Texts:** Tate, Gary, Edward P. J. Corbett, and Nancy Myers, eds. The Writing Teacher's Sourcebook. 4th ed. New York: Oxford, 2000.

Kearns, Jane. Where to Begin: A Guide to Teaching Secondary English. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 1997.

Atwell, Nancie. In the Middle: New Understandings about Writing Reading and Learning. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1998.

Weaver, Constance. Lessons to Share. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook.

**Course Requirements:** You must complete all parts of all assignments to receive credit for the class. Attendance is mandatory.

#### Response/Daily Work

- *Response papers*--Respond to assigned and self-selected readings. (Do not read more than 20 pages before responding.) **Cite the pages to which you refer.** Submit a hard copy of each response on the assigned due date.
- *Formative evaluation*--Respond to peers' and writing.
- *In-class writing, informal group and individual activities*

#### Research projects

- *Independent project*--Select an area of particular interest in writing pedagogy (i.e. prewriting, planning, drafting, responding, revising, writing as process, audience, journaling, writing-to-learn, Writing-across-the-Curriculum, teaching collaborative writing, portfolios, evaluation, using writing to develop critical thinking, gender, working with English as a Second Language writers). Find books and articles (200 pages min.) on the topic and write responses **as you read**. Do not read farther than 20 pages without stopping to write a portion of your response. Prepare an essay on writing/speaking pedagogy in MLA or APA form, including a Works Cited page and in-text references (5 full pages minimum). Include Works Cited/References page. Prepare an oral presentation of your research (at least 10 minutes but no more than 15 minutes).
- *Group project* (English/English Ed. Spring Conference)--Select an area of writing pedagogy to research (i.e. writing-to-learn, Writing-across-the-Curriculum, teaching poetry or play writing, peer responding, revising, literacy, assessing writing, teaching ESL students, journaling, persuasion, awareness of audience, listening skills, teaching genre, censorship, publishing, gender issues, collaborative writing).
  - a. Each group member read books and articles (200 pages min.) on the topic and respond in the professional journal. Then prepare a professional paper in MLA or APA form on the issue or practice (min. 5 full pages). Include Works Cited or References page.
  - b. Meet with your group to discuss connections and contradictions in the reading. Then draft a proposal and organize a presentation for the conference, including a bibliography. Blend information from your research with assigned readings and your experiences with students this semester to make an assertion. Allow 10-15 min. per speaker plus time to field questions.
- *Clinical Experience Essay*--Reflect on experiences with mentoring peers and secondary students in writing. Review your response papers. Draw conclusions based upon these experiences and present them in essay form. **Cite specific examples from your experiences to ground your assertions** (minimum of 3 pages).

### Professional Portfolio

Table of Contents  
Philosophy of composition pedagogy  
Resume  
Essay on writing pedagogy (independent project)  
Conference paper (group project)  
Clinical experience essay  
Three sample writing prompts (literary essay, expository essay, creative writing)  
Proof of membership in NCTE and/or IATE  
Letters of Recommendation

**Course Grade:** Penalties for excessive absences will be deducted as described in the “Attendance” section. Otherwise, your final course grade will be determined by the following:

Daily Work/Responses	20%
Independent Project/Essay on Pedagogy	20%
Group Project/English/English Education Conference	20%
Clinical Experience Essay	20%
Portfolio (organization, eye appeal, labeling, thoroughness)	20%

A= 90% to 100%

B= 80% to 89%

C= 70% to 79%

D= 60% to 69%

F= 0% to 59%

**Attendance:** Because this course emphasizes writing as process and as collaborative activity, attendance is essential. During the group project, your classmates will rely on you to participate in the process of completing it. Class exercises and peer review activities (generally worth 10-20 points each) cannot be made up at a later date. After a third absence, each additional absence will also result in a penalty of one full letter grade subtracted from your final course grade. For an absence to be excused, bring proper verification (written documentation approved by me) for illness, emergency, or university-sanctioned activities. If it is an excused absence, attending a pre-approved workshop or lecture appropriate to the course description can make up the time. Perfect attendance merits the addition of 20 extra-credit points to the daily work score.

**Plagiarism:** In accordance with English Department and University policies, “Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—‘The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation as one’s original work’ (*Random House Dictionary of the English Language*)—has the right and responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty up to and including immediate assignment of the grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.” The best argument against plagiarism is that you cheat yourself out of the education you are here to obtain when you copy someone else’s work. If you believe that a specific instance in your writing might constitute plagiarism, please consult me prior to turning in the final draft.

**Students with Disabilities:** If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services.

## English 3401 Course Schedule

This schedule is subject to additions and changes at my discretion. Assignments are due on the date that they appear on the schedule.

- 1-12 Course Introduction
- 1-14 Kearns 1-58
  
- 1-21 Kearns 59-129; Response Paper due
  
- 1-26 Atwell 1-86; Response Paper due
- 1-28 Atwell 87-147; Bring information for resume (i.e. Names, addresses, phone numbers, e-mail addresses of references, dates of employment, addresses of places of employment).
  
- 2-2 Atwell 148-298; Response Paper due
- 2-4 Atwell 299-392; **Resume draft due** for peer response
  
- 2-9 Atwell 392-484; Response Paper due
- 2-11 Morgan, "Ethical Issues Raised by Students' Personal Writing" (Sourcebook 87-93) and Roskelly "The Risky Business of Group Work" (Sourcebook 123-28); Independent Project Response due to at least 100 pages of source material
  
- 2-16 Reither "Writing and Knowing: Toward Redefining the Writing Process" (Sourcebook 286-93) and Park "The Meanings of 'Audience' " (Sourcebook 310-19); Independent Project Response due to rest of source material
- 2-18 **Independent Project Paper draft due** for peer response
  
- 2-23 **Independent Project Paper due**; Prepare for Independent Project Oral Presentations
- 2-25 Begin Oral Presentations; Ohmann "Use Definite, Specific, Concrete Language" (Sourcebook 384-91)
  
- 3-1 Continue Oral Presentations; Weaver Chapters 1-2; Response Paper due
- 3-3 Continue Oral Presentations; Weaver Chapters 4 and 10
  
- 3-8 Continue Oral Presentations; Weaver Chapters 11-12; Response Paper due
- 3-10 Finish Oral Presentations; Weaver Chapters 15 and 18
  
- 3-22 Devitt "Generalizing about Genre" and Clark "Reconsideration of Genre" (both on e-reserve); Response Paper due
- 3-24 No Class; Research Day for Group Project Conference Paper
  
- 3-29 Williams "Assessing Writing" (e-reserve); Response Paper due; **Literary Essay writing prompt due** for peer response
- 3-31 Zamel "Strangers in Academia: The Experiences of Faculty and ESL Students Across the Curriculum" (100-12); **Creative Writing and Expository Essay prompts due** for peer response
  
- 4-5 Hillocks "Rhetoric in the Classroom: Prospects for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century"; Response Paper due
- 4-7 **Grading/Comments due** to student papers (from hand-out)

- 4-12 Rose "Remedial Writing Courses: A Critique and a Proposal" (Sourcebook 193-211) and Peck, Hoffman, and Rose "A Comment and Response on 'Remedial Writing Courses' " (Sourcebook 212-15); Response Paper due
- 4-14 Philosophy of Composition Pedagogy draft due for peer response
- 4-19 **Group Project Conference Paper due** for peer response
- 4-21 **Conference Paper due**; Prepare for conference oral presentations
- 4-24 **English/English Education Conference** (participation required)
- 4-26 **Clinical Experience Essay draft due** for peer response
- 4-28 **Portfolio due**